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Christ In The World



Ruth Carver Gardner

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Christ In The World

Ruth Carver Gardner



Educational Department
FOREIGN MISSION BOARD
Southern Baptist Convention
RICHMOND, VA.

1933

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GREETINGS TO SOUTHERN BAPTIST WOMEN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

We send forth this little book by Mrs. Ruth Carver Gardner with a deep sense of satisfaction and joy. She has done her work well, and has made a distinct and valuable contribution to the mission study literature of the Foreign Mission Board.

The Woman's Missionary Union of the Southern Baptist Convention is devotedly following in the footsteps of that first missionary society of Galilee who followed Jesus during the years of His earthly ministry and "ministered unto him."

The total received from the Woman's Missionary Union of the South for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for 1932, was \$129,687.27. Out of this amount the sum of \$101,011.26 was set aside for the salaries, travel expenses and children's allowances of the 103 missionaries, and the remainder was paid out for specific and special items and causes as designated by the Woman's Missionary Union.

We are deeply and profoundly grateful to the Woman's Missionary Union for this generous and timely aid extended to our distressed and perplexed Mission Board. This generous and unselfish support of the women of the South has saved the Foreign Mission Board from serious embarrassment. It will never be forgotten that in the hour of travail and tragedy for our Foreign Mission Board, the women and W. M. U. young people of the South saved the day with their 1932 Christmas Offering. The crisis has not passed and the need is even greater as we face the year 1934, with its crushing debts and ever diminishing income.

"Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east and have come to worship him," said the Wise men as they came to Bethlehem bringing their gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh. This *attitude* and *action* of the Wise men at the first Christmas celebration, was but

prophetic and typical, of the *yearning* and *response* of the lost millions of the earth today.

Recently a great missionary came back from India to say that multitudes in that land of the high cast and the untouchables, were already *mentally* converted to the Gospel of Christ.

Luke tells us that when Christ came on that first Christmas "the people were in expectation," and our missionaries tell us that this is true of the multitudes in all heathen and pagan lands today. Every door in the world except in Russia, stands open today to the entrance of the missionary with his gospel of saving grace. The heart-hunger and *despair* of the multitudes everywhere, presents to Southern Baptists the greatest challenge of all the eighty-eight years since the Foreign Board sent out the first missionary, Samuel Clopton, to China in 1845. The whole world is seething with unrest and soul-hunger, and the Risen and Enthroned Christ is still saying to us, "Go and lo, I am with you."

Missionaries and mission stations in fourteen foreign countries will be waiting in an agony of prayer and intense expectation this coming Christmas season, as the women and W. M. U. young people of the South come to the observance of the Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions. The success of the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering will mean renewed hope and courage for many grateful, over-worked missionaries and will gladden the heart of our enthroned and expectant Christ.

Sincerely yours,

CHARLES E. MADDY,
Executive Secretary.

MISSION ROOMS
RICHMOND, VA.

September 1, 1933.

CHRIST IN THE WORLD

SUGGESTIONS FOR FIRST DAY'S MEETING

Hymn: "Jesus Calls Us."

Prayer: That God's Spirit may be present to guide our study.

Announcements.

Introduction (with map) The World when Christ Came: A Small World.

Hymn: "Christ for the World We Sing." First Verse.

Scripture Study: Romans 1:18-32. This description of the old world was written by the Apostle Paul to citizens of the capital of that world, who recognized the accuracy of the picture here painted.

Study: A United World; a Peaceful World; A "Prosperous" World.

Prayer: Bringing *our* world to God. Pray that He shall strengthen all forces that make for righteousness; that evil shall be destroyed through the operation of the Holy Spirit and the faithfulness of God's servants; that all agencies promoting world friendliness and helpfulness shall prosper; that we Christians in this group shall feel our responsibility for our brothers and sisters over all the world.

Study: A Wicked World.

Hymn: "Christ for the World We Sing." Second Verse.

Scripture: Acts 17:22, 23a.

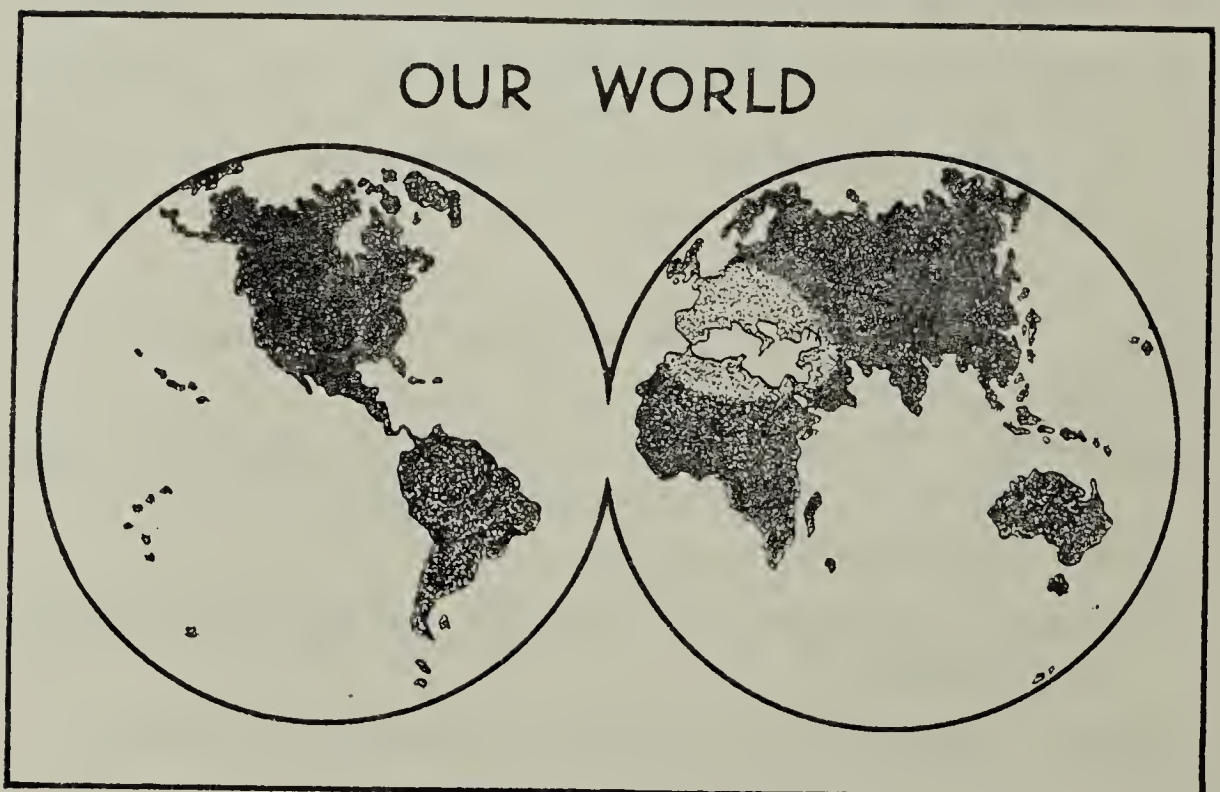
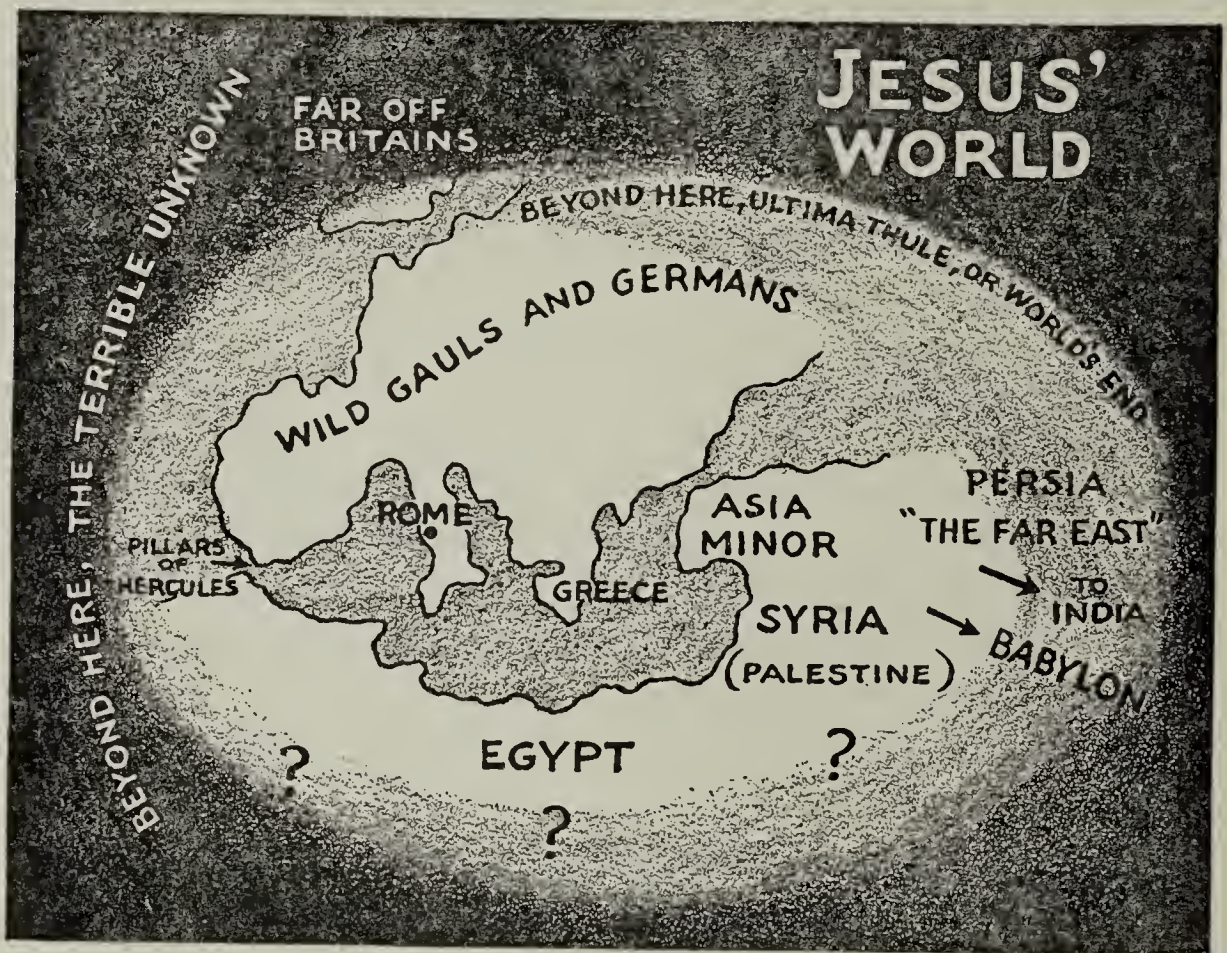
Quotation: "Where shall He be found whom we have been seeking for so many centuries?" Seneca.

Study: A Soul-hungry World.

Discussion: In what ways was this ancient world like our world today?

Prayer: That we may be faithful stewards in our world.

(Suggestion for Poster or Blackboard Drawing)



CHRIST IN THE WORLD

CHAPTER I

THE WORLD WHEN CHRIST CAME

- I. A SMALL WORLD.
- II. A UNITED WORLD.
- III. A PEACEFUL WORLD.
- IV. A "PROSPEROUS" WORLD.
- V. A WICKED WORLD.
- VI. A SOUL-HUNGRY WORLD.
 - 1. Failure of State Religions.
 - 2. Failure of Mystery Religions.
 - 3. Failure of Stoicism.
 - 4. Failure of Street Preachers.
 - 5. Influence of Jews.
 - 6. Need of a Saviour.

"Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God for the likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts unto uncleanness, that their bodies should be dishonored among themselves. . . . And even as they refused to have God in knowledge, God gave them up to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not fitting, being filled with all unrighteousness."—Rom. 1:23, 24, 28, 29a.

"Ye men of Athens, in all things I perceive that ye are very religious. For as I passed along, and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD."—Acts 17:22, 23a.

"Where shall He be found whom we have been seeking for so many centuries?"—Seneca.

"But when the time was fully come, God sent forth his Son . . . to purchase the freedom of all . . ."—Gal. 4:4, 5. Weymouth Trans.

I. A SMALL WORLD

Let us borrow our children's geographies and take a look at the world into which God sent His Son. Side by side we place the double circle which represents our globe, and the tiny ring of lands around the Mediterranean which was all the world the men of ancient times knew. Beyond that ring few ever ventured, and none came back to tell the tale. Far to the north, in Gaul and the remote island of Britain, lived blue-eyed savages; to the east, wild barbarians; and in the frozen stretches of the northeast and the burning desert south, no man knew what. This little ring of seacoast and islands was civilization.

What a tiny world it seems to us! Yet its far places were more difficult to reach than any spot on the globe now is. It took longer for Paul to make his trip from Palestine to Rome than is taken for many a round the world cruise today. Its different peoples were as strange to each other as our races. In its way, it was a complete world.

II. A UNITED WORLD

It was a world which was one, politically. In times past, many different kings and nations had ambitiously tried to conquer the whole known world. None had quite succeeded. But a young, strong, western power, the Republic of Rome, had sent her matchless armies east, and north, and south and west, until before Jesus came, Rome did actually rule the world. At the same time, the Roman people became more and more unable to rule themselves—(has that a modern sound?)—and had surrendered their government into the hands of dictators who became Emperors. The Babe of Bethlehem came into the world under the rule of the first of these Emperors, Caesar Augustus.

The Romans had a genius for organizing and governing "inferior peoples." In their methodical, practical, brutal, but effective way, they set out to improve their vast territories. The famous Roman roads—so good that some of them are in use to this day—began to stretch out, like spokes of a giant spider web, through lands which theretofore had been impassable. In all parts of the world, from Britain to Persia, sprang up Roman cities "with all modern improvements":—water supply systems, huge public baths, theatres and circuses, and magnificent homes and gardens for the ruling class. The soldiers, obedient, efficient and ruthless, did police duty. There was no liberty anywhere in the world. Everywhere in the world was order, and harsh but very effective government.

III. A PEACEFUL WORLD

For the first time in the history of mankind, all this world was at peace. Do we pause aghast at such a thought? Then can we think of a time since that day when all the world has been at peace? We remember that there is war on two continents this very hour. We think back over the times we have known; we consult our histories. Can we find a time when, everywhere, the armies of every country were idle; when blood was not being shed and bitter battle waged between men and men? So we come to have a new respect for this Roman Peace, harsh as it was, and forced upon the world by means of might and fear. At least for once in the history of mankind, war ceased; and into this little breathing space God sent the Prince of Peace.

IV. A "PROSPEROUS" WORLD

This world into which Christ came was a rich world. The Roman armies had captured uncounted treasures of Eastern kings. One general, Pompey, brought home from one campaign loot which has been estimated at over four million dollars.

All this wealth was added to the ever growing prosperity which business and commerce were bringing to the peaceful and united world. There were millionaires in those days beside whom our most gaudy modern spenders are "pikers." Who hasn't heard of the banquets of nightingales' tongues? Who doesn't know of that typical example of Roman luxuriousness: how when at one of the magnificent feasts a man had reached the point where he absolutely could not swallow another of the costly delicacies, he could retire to a place thoughtfully provided and there with the aid of a feather down his throat make room for more costly delicacies. And all the while, perhaps just outside the door of the mansion, a man or a little child was dying of starvation.

For there has never been, perhaps, such wide-spread misery side by side with such unimaginable extravagance. One cause of this was the huge number of slaves. Whatever people the Romans conquered, barbarians or representatives of cultures old before Rome was born, of that people they took slaves. Practically all the work of the world, from teaching and doctoring to the most degraded tasks, was done by slaves.

This system provided the rich with continual luxuries; but what of the poor men, the simple people whose fathers in the good old days of the early Republic had made their frugal livings on the farm or at some useful craft? Their occupations were gone. We have a terrible problem of unemployment all over the world in our day; consider how much more terrible in proportion was this. The poor people found only two avenues open to them: they joined the army, which took care of them but made no provision for their families; or the entire family moved to a city, and became just another unit in the slum section—idle of necessity, untaught, criminal either actually or potentially, always on the edge of starvation, and often kept alive only by doles of bread from the Government. Thus great wealth and great poverty jostled each other all over the world when Christ came; and the misery of idleness encompassed both.

V. A WICKED WORLD

It is needless to say that the world to which Jesus came was a wicked world. The distinguishing sins of the Roman people were cruelty and arrogance. No Pagan people has known tenderness toward the weak and helpless as Christianity has taught tenderness; but the Romans seemed to have a lust for cruelty in their very blood. It showed in every aspect of their life: in the treatment of the slaves, and as well in the treatment of their unwanted children, left to die on many a lonely hill-side; in the business world and in the courts of justice, and, most strangely, in their great places of amusement. In all that ancient world, the blood of the helpless cried out unavenged.

If cruelty was the great Roman vice, light-hearted immorality was that of the Greeks. Of the three influential peoples of that olden time—Romans, Greeks, Jews,—the Greeks have always stood as the representatives of almost ideal humanity. Such clever people they were, so dowered with artistic and intellectual ability, with such a genius for harmonious living! They developed all the gifts and graces of life, except just those which lie at the heart of all life: the grace of wholesome and beautiful home life; the gift of personal integrity of character. Liars and tricksters through a very exuberance of mentality, their national sin was the degradation of their womanhood through false and immoral relations between the sexes. Not only the offscourings of humanity, but the most distinguished citizens of the ancient world had openly shameful relations with both men and women. When the Romans conquered Greece, along with Greek culture and wisdom, they took over Greek vice. Divorces were about as common then as now.

VI. A SOUL-HUNGRY WORLD

It has a very modern sound, has it not?—this ancient world, with its busy commerce, its constant travel over the hard surface roads, its governmental problems, its dictators and doles,

its unemployed, its "sex question" and "birth control" and its myriad forms of luxury and sin. After all, however, these are but surface resemblances. The real likeness lies much deeper than such things. The heart of man has not changed these two thousand years. Beneath all differences, these were the same sort of people as you and I: moved by the same joys and sorrows, trapped by the same desires and sins, capable of the same heroisms, succumbing to the same littlenesses, walled in by the same narrowness and selfishness, hungering and thirsting after the same righteousness. Throughout that world, in all the places where the vicious economic system had not made it impossible, honest, home-keeping and kindly people lived their simple lives and left no record behind them. And everywhere through all that world the hearts of men were crying out for God.

1. Yes, the world to which Jesus came was a soul-sick world and a soul-hungry world. The misery and despair, and even the wickedness and heartlessness, were largely the direct result of the failure of men to come in touch with God. *Their religions had failed*, as they were bound to fail. The Romans had created gods in their own image, cruel, warlike and dignified; the Greeks also, beautiful, gay and licentious. Thoughtful people had long since ceased to believe in them. The Roman religion had degenerated into a political policy; the Greek, into various systems of philosophy. The unsatisfied hearts of men turned elsewhere.

2. Slaves brought by the Romans from the mystical East had brought with them their religions. They seemed to mean something to these slaves, thought the masters; so they turned to investigate. *Thus these eastern religions, the mystery cults, came to have a wide following in the Roman Empire.* The rituals were exciting and often beautiful, the practises mysterious to outsiders but full of meaning to the converts. The equality and fellowship among the worshippers was something new to the Romans, and something noble. There was desperately honest seeking for communion with God. But there

were usually also immoral and beastly practises mingled with these fine things. And so, while many of the unthinking found satisfaction thus, the deeper souls came back upon themselves, still seeking.

3. Many of the noblest of that day found their deepest satisfaction in *Stoicism*, the philosophy which taught that the way to happiness and peace was to do right for the sake of right alone, and not to allow anything in this too-sad world to matter much to the philosopher. Such a belief, however, offered no motive power to enable the seeker to reach his ideal.

4. Then there were, as there are today, "soap-box" orators and faddists galore; and *street preachers called the masses of the poor to repentance and better life*. But as we have seen, the conditions under which these poor lived made it impossible for them to lead better lives unless something could happen to transform their whole beings. This, the street preachers could not do.

5. There was one source of satisfaction for the heart-hunger of the old world, which many of its citizens did not neglect. *This was found in the Synagogues of the Jews*. There were in that day, as in this, Jews in every corner of the civilized world: Roman Jews, Greek Jews or Babylonian Jews, as we have Polish Jews, German Jews or American Jews, but still, as always, Jews. Some had gone afar in search of favorable trade or living conditions. Many had been carried to their foreign homes (or their ancestors had), by one or another of the conquerors of Palestine. These "foreign" Jews were known as the "Diaspora," or the "Dispersion." Wherever as many as ten families lived in one place, there they built a Synagogue, where Jehovah's Law was taught to their sons by day, and to the whole congregation Sabbath after Sabbath. And there earnest inquirers, impressed by the religion of this unique people, came also to worship. These Gentiles were known as "God-Fearers" by the Jews; and from them came many of the earliest converts to Christianity.

6. As we look back on this world to which Christ came, we see then a world ready for Him, even to weariness. A world outwardly one and at peace; yet a world wherein class warred against class, man against woman, rich against poor; and all the old, tragic, pitiful strife of man against his fellow was waged with unexampled ferocity and wanton cruelty. A world in which all the wickedness of which the dark heart of man is capable seemed to be let loose; yet a world in which the angel in man's soul cried out against the wickedness and cruelty, and yearned after that God whose Name is Love. A world gone sophisticated and luxurious to a degree, whence simple joy had all but fled, and in which no certainty had been found on which to build peace, happiness and power of soul. A world which sought, and had not found, a universal and true religion. A world, in short, much like ours at many points; but in none more than this: that it was a world which desperately needed Christ, the Saviour.

Questions for Review and Discussion

1. How large was the world to which Christ came? Can you bound it?
2. Who were the rulers of the world? Tell some good things about them. Some bad things.
3. Give six characteristics of this world. Discuss one of these.
4. What three peoples contributed greatly to the civilization of that world? Name one contribution of each.
5. In what parts of the Roman world were Jews found?
6. Compare the world to which Christ came with our world in (1) its good points; (2) its civilization; (3) its sins; (4) its needs.
7. What do you think was the greatest need of that world?

CHRIST IN THE WORLD

SUGGESTIONS FOR SECOND DAY'S MEETING

Invocation: "Spirit of the Living God, fall fresh on me;
Fill me; break me; mould me; make me;
Spirit of the Living God, fall fresh on me.
Amen."

Silent Prayer.

Scripture Study: Luke 4:17-21; Acts 1:1-14; 8-1; 13:1-4.

Study: Jesus Begins His Work.

Hymn: "The Church's One Foundation." First Verse.

Study: The Early Church.

Prayer: For organized Christian work everywhere; for our denomination.

Study: The Dark Ages.

Hymn: "The Church's One Foundation." Second Verse.

Study: Dawn of a New Day.

Prayer: For Evangelical Christians in Europe, remembering particularly our Baptist brothers and sisters in Spain, Italy, Russia, Rumania, Hungary and Jugo-Slavia, with whom we co-operate. For all Baptist groups; for the Baptist World Alliance.

Study: Rise of the Modern Missionary Movement.

Hymn: "The Church's One Foundation." Third and Fourth Verses.

Prayer: For our Mission Churches in South America, Mexico, Africa, China, Japan and Palestine.

For all groups now studying and praying about missions.
For the growth of the missionary spirit in our church.

Silent Prayer: For the growth of the Holy Spirit's work in my heart.

Dismissal: Repetition of Invocation.

(Suggestion for Poster or Blackboard)

The Work Which Christ Began

"And I, if I be lifted up, . . . will draw ALL MEN unto myself."

"Go ye into ALL THE WORLD."



12

Several Hundred
Thousands
(300 A.D.)

THE ROMAN EMPIRE
(Heathen "Converted" Wholesale)
Heathen Invasions and Conquests

FALL OF ROME
(500 A.D.)

DARK AGES



THE CHURCH

1100 A.D. CRUSADES

(1492)

NEW BIRTH OF KNOWLEDGE; NEW DISCOVERIES
(1500-1600)

REFORMATION



(1792)

WILLIAM CAREY

MODERN MISSION MOVEMENT
INTO ALL THE WORLD AT LAST!

CHRIST IN THE WORLD

CHAPTER II

THE WORK WHICH CHRIST BEGAN

- I. JESUS BEGINS HIS WORK.
 1. His life.
 2. His ministry.
 3. His messengers.
- II. THE EARLY CHURCH.
 1. Its rapid spread.
 2. Persecutions.
 3. Changes and corruptions.
- III. THE DARK AGES.
 1. Coming of the heathen.
 2. "A Light in the Darkness."
- IV. DAWN OF A NEW DAY.
 1. Discovery of old knowledge and new worlds.
 2. Rise of Protestantism.
 3. Struggle among the churches.
- V. RISE OF THE MODERN MISSIONARY MOVEMENT.
 1. Slow development of missionary spirit.
 2. "1492-1792."
 3. Apostolic character of modern missionary movement.
 4. My part in the modern missionary movement.

"And he opened the book, and found the place where it was written,

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
Because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor ;
He hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives,
And recovering of sight to the blind,
To set at liberty them that are bruised,
To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

“And he closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant, and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, Today hath this scripture been fulfilled in your ears.”—Luke 4:17b-21.

“But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you; and ye shall be my witnesses . . .”—Acts 1:8a.

“And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church which was in Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles.”—Acts 8:1.

“Now there were at Antioch, in the church that was there, prophets and teachers . . . And as they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

“So they, being sent forth by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.”—Acts 13:1-4.

I. JESUS BEGINS HIS WORK

1. Into this soul-hungry, sinful world, a Babe was born. In one of the small wholesome spots that redeemed its rotten state, a Boy grew up. His clear eyes saw the quiet village life, the hardy simplicity of the shepherds on the neighboring hills, the busy camel caravans which brought the great world through, the splendid marching soldiers who meant the cruel, all-over-shadowing Roman rule.

Amongst his neighbors, doing homely service, a young Carpenter worked. Protecting his widowed mother, a Son and Brother provided livelihood and guidance for his family. Quietly, a villager went his way in quiet Nazareth.

2. Round about the narrow limits of Galilee a Prophet walked. His goings were attended with signs of power and

merciful healing and the favor of God. From out all the little cities flocked folk to see and hear and be helped; who worshipped God, saying, "We never saw it on this fashion!" But his miracles of help were incidental to his message. Over and over he sounded the theme of his preaching: The Kingdom of Heaven! The Kingdom of Heaven! The Kingdom of Heaven is within you. And gradually it was borne in upon his hearers that this kingdom they had hailed so joyfully was quite other than they thought. There was to be no magic healing of all the ills that poor flesh is heir to. There was to be no easy life, with a bountiful miracle worker to smoothe away all difficulties and make them noble and happy by a word.

The religious leaders came up from Jerusalem to investigate this provincial preacher. They found themselves moving from half-credulous curiosity to alarmed questionings; then to jealous watchfulness; then to open hostility, and on to plots and determined hatred which followed him to the very tomb and beyond. The crowds, charmed at first, and hopeful of an easy escape from their miserable or baffled or discontented lives, turned away. Then Jesus, with breaking heart, seeing them go, turned with Divine assurance to the Twelve, and—knowing that one of them was a devil—poured out the last year of His life in founding in them and of them His Church, against which the gates of hell should not prevail.

3. How short a ministry to change the world! Three years, resulting for the most part in what the world would count failure. Three years, ending in shameful death.

How unstable the men whom He must use as the foundation for all His redemptive work! How He worked with them! How slowly they came to understand the nature and necessities of the Kingdom! How they were scattered and routed as they saw their Leader betrayed unto death, yea, the death of the cross!

To them, that first Easter morning, it was all over. To the Christ, it was just beginning. Gradually, against reason, com-

mon-sense, human limitations, they were convinced. And thus they were transformed. Now indeed could He say, "Ye shall be my witnesses." From that hour they were bound to be what they were called to be: apostles, which is, being interpreted, missionaries. During the forty days between Jesus' resurrection and His ascension, He outlined to them the task which was theirs. *But* they were to tarry in Jerusalem until the Comforter should come upon them; until they should be endued with power from on high.

There has been no part of His program carried out from that day until this, except in the power of that Spirit of God.

II. THE EARLY CHURCH

1. We have not realized, perhaps, how *startlingly rapid was the spread of Christianity*. Every Christian was a missionary, telling—openly wherever possible, stealthily when necessary—to other hungry souls the precious knowledge of the power that had transformed his life. Small wonder, then, that by the end of the first Century Christianity was established in all the large cities from Jerusalem to Rome, had gone as far eastward as Persia and India, was strong in Egypt, and had begun to reach out to the western and northern frontier lands.

2. In proportion to the rapidity with which it spread, grew the *persecutions* of the new faith. First the Jews only, then polite gentile society, and finally the long indifferent Roman government, joined in, and cold, hard, relentless persecution grew and spread all over the Empire.

The Romans know, and cared to know, little about the Christian faith. The most horrid lies were told and believed by intelligent people: as that Christians had an ass's head for god, which they worshipped with foul and obscene rites; that they used the blood of little children in their observance of the Lord's Supper: all the pitiful and cruel falsehoods which ignorance always manufactures to excuse and foster hatred.

But underneath such misrepresentation, was reason in official Rome's position. Though she might not know why, she was right in sensing that Christianity was her enemy. For where the religion of Jesus Christ prevails, the religion of force and "might is right" cannot live.

Wave after wave of violence and death overwhelmed the Church, but could not drown it. "Kill us," cried one martyr to his murderers, "torture us, condemn us, grind us to dust . . . Yet your cruelty does not avail . . . The oftener we are mown down . . . the more numerous we grow; the blood of Christians is seed." After three hundred years, the Church emerged, serene, triumphant. The Emperor Constantine in 311 A.D. adopted the Christian religion, and a new day began.

3. When Christian men and women began at Pentecost the work of carrying out their Divine Leader's command, their organization was, as we know, as loose and informal as possible. Gradually, through the years, the machinery became more complicated; order, authority, and rank began to be imposing; Christianity began to be set in a mould. This is true of every human movement; there are a good many Southern Baptists who see with distress how it is beginning to be true of us.

In the days of persecution, this tendency, while growing, was relatively unimportant. When with Constantine's conversion Christianity became the "State Religion," it increased by leaps and bounds. Soon, too soon, instead of the Christianity of Jesus and Paul, there was an elaborately complicated organization, largely borrowed from paganism, known as the "Holy Catholic (that is, Universal) Church."

With these changes in organization, came corruptions in belief, until we should not recognize in the elaborate magical rites called Sacraments the simple and beautiful ordinances instituted by Jesus.

The missionary spirit of the Church did not die, but it too changed. Many devoted missionaries went, authorized by the Holy Father, or Pope, to the wild tribes of Europe and Britain.

These tribes were "Christianized" wholesale, and thus brought under the authority of Mother Church, which was the missionaries' changed idea of salvation. Dr. Carver (*Course of Christian Missions*, p. 82), gives this sample of how it was done, for hundreds of years.* "Hedwig, who was heiress to the throne of Poland, yielded to the desire of Jagellon and became his wife on condition of his becoming a Christian, 1386. La Garde says: 'Then passing through Lithuania, he overthrew the pagan sanctuaries, destroyed the idols, urged his subjects to become Christians, and promised woolen clothing to those who took his advice. The apostolic mission of the prince, and especially the woolen clothing, had an irresistibly persuasive effect. The nobles were baptized one at a time; as for the lower classes—they were divided into groups, which were sprinkled with holy water. Shortly after this comforting ceremony, Lithuania received a bishop'."

III. THE DARK AGES

We must not blame the early Christians too much for these changes. They were not deliberate; they grew up almost imperceptibly through the slow centuries, brought about for the most part by earnest Christians, earnestly trying to further the Kingdom. They are a striking example of the way the devil works with the best of us; and a no less striking example of how the Holy Spirit uses all the Christianity there is at any given time, in his unceasing work of bringing in Christ's Kingdom. For it was this Church, little Christian as it may seem to us, which in a hostile, then cataclysmic, and finally chaotic world, saved alive the Spirit of knowledge, and the Spirit of progress, and the Spirit of Christ.

1. Between the years 300 and 500 A.D., *rude and lusty barbarians, our ancestors, made one raid after another on the*

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civilized world, and finally, just at the close of the century, accomplished the fall of the Empire. Seemingly, the patient accumulations of at least a thousand years had been swept away, and man was back again in an almost primitive stage. Knowledge was gone; civilized manners were gone; all the fruits of study, philosophy, and investigation were gone.

2. *But there was one thing that did not go, and that was the Holy Catholic Church.* The majesty of her ritual, the unhurried solidity of the state she had built, impressed even the wildest heathen. Many of them were already, by the rough processes of "conversion" described above, within the Church; more, through superstition or reverence, bowed to her sway. Thus the Church became the savior of the heathen, and of civilization.

The Spirit of God strove mightily for the redemption of His world in those dark years. Scattered like stars across those centuries are God's saints, in monasteries or in the far places, who patiently taught ignorant heathen (whether called by Christ's name or not) to walk Christ's way. The Pope who sat at Rome and claimed Peter's keys might be a good and kindly man, or a real missionary statesman, or a pagan scholar, or a shrewd politician, or a reprobate whose deeds cried aloud to heaven for shamefulness; but through the hamlets and castles and countrysides of Europe, men still hungered and thirsted after righteousness, loved justice and mercy, and walked humbly with their God: these were of the true "Apostolic Succession."

IV. DAWN OF A NEW DAY

1. After the thousand-year-long night, a new day began to dawn. Things had been happening throughout that night, which men did not clearly see or understand; but just at the close of the fifteenth century, an Italian adventurer first set eyes on a new world beyond that sea which men had once thought the end of all things.

The new world stands to us for a new day: a day of high adventure, wide explorations, boundless faith. The soul of man began to awake and look about in every direction. Old, long-buried knowledge was rediscovered with a thrill. Trade became a glamorous and magnificent enterprise. Great poets, painters, sculptors, thinkers, blossomed forth like rich flowers upon the tree of life. There was a new earnestness and a new joy about living. *We call this time the Renaissance: the New Birth.*

2. There was a new consciousness of the presence of God in the world, but the significant part of this spiritual reawakening came outside the Church. All through the centuries there had been dauntless souls to protest against the corruption and paganism; these had been hastily silenced—through dungeon, fire or exile—by an alarmed orthodoxy. But they kept alive the flame of true doctrine from one generation to another. Now they began to be many and mighty. How thrilling is their story, which we cannot tell here. They rescued the Bible, long hidden in a foreign tongue from even the monks and preachers; they aroused the newly awakened people against vice and corruption in the church; they too endured flame and sword for Christ's sake. *In religion, the new movement was called the Reformation.*

3. The Reformers, or Protestants, were united in only one thing: opposition to the Catholic Church. In accordance with the ideas of the time, each religious sect tried to spread "the true faith" by means of power of whatever government was on its side. *There followed years of chaotic conflict* all over Europe. Can we get a picture of it? Brother arrayed against brother, mother against daughter; Catholics burning Protestants, and Protestants, Catholics. Christians dealing death to Christians in the name of the Prince of Peace! How the prince of the powers of the air must have laughed at the sight!

But there was a hollow sound at the heart of such laughter. For through sin and mistake and loss, the Holy Spirit was at

his redemptive work. Old evil and error in the body of Christ were being annihilated. Heroes of the Cross were being born of that struggle; what matter though they died of it? It was being made more possible for men and women to walk after Him of Galilee.

All the great Protestant denominations came out of that struggle. The separation of Church and State came out of it. The democracy of England, the Protestantism of Germany (just now so sorely tried), the Republicanism of France, came out of it. The United States came out of it, with all that she means and, please God, shall mean to the world. John Milton came out of it, and Pilgrim John Bunyan, and the great, rugged, Scotch Presbyterianism which, on both sides of the Atlantic, has given us some of our greatest missionaries. Yes, that struggle was divine; for through the turgid and chaotic hearts of men, great in purpose though often tragically wrong in deed, the work that Christ began was going on.

V. RISE OF THE MODERN MISSIONARY MOVEMENT

1. Throughout this long time of strife and change, *there was among Protestants practically no effort to take the Gospel to the heathen*. First they were too busy, these new denominations, in defending their forms of faith—often their lives—to look abroad. It was a hundred and fifty years after the Reformation before they took any interest in missionary work outside Europe; and it was three hundred years before any Protestant church formally accepted the responsibility for the evangelization of the heathen world.

But the Holy Spirit could not rest while the followers of Jesus remained such fractional Christians; could not rest while the Divine Commission was all unheeded, and so great a part of mankind whom He had died to save still groped and struggled in ignorance and sin.

2. We must think of those three hundred years as a time of preparation for the great task of world evangelization. Then, again at the close of a century, something happened.

We look at the two dates side by side; there seems to be a thrilling significance to them. *In 1492 the Italian, Christopher Columbus, discovered the new world: in 1792, the English cobler-preacher, William Carey, discovered the whole world—for God.* On Sundays he preached at the humble little Baptist chapel, this unassuming middle-class Englishman. On week days he tap-tapped at his shoe-making, with many a long look at the open Bible by his side, and many another at the home-made map of the world tacked to the wall before him. And while he worked and studied, the fires of God burned within him until they reached the conflagration point.

Then he stood up in his associational meeting, and modestly proposed the following question: "whether the command given to the apostles to teach all nations was not obligatory on all ministers to the end of the world." The response he got was, mostly indignation, amusement or indifference; but three years later, on *October 2, 1792*, twelve Baptist preachers formed the first society for promoting the evangelization of the world, with an initial subscription of thirteen pounds, ten shillings and six pence. The next year they sent out Carey, their first missionary, to India. With his marvelous work, the modern missionary movement began.

3. We cannot begin to tell the thrilling story of that movement. We may only note that in *four* respects, at least, this hundred and fifty years of proclamation of the Gospel resembles that first great outgoing missionary movement of the followers of Jesus. *First*, it came in the "fullness of time," when world movements had made practically the whole earth accessible, as the Roman world was in the first centuries. *Second*, the missionaries went out with one purpose: to tell the good news of the Kingdom. *Third*, there was a glad urgency about the work, and a haste to reach lost men. *Finally*, the two

movements may well be compared as to results. Like those first missionaries, our missionaries have gone all over the world. Dr. Carver, (Course of Christian Missions, p. 304), says: "We are at length coming to see that there are no longer any non-Christian lands. For one reason, there are now Christians in every land, very few in some lands and all too few in every land; yet there is no land and hardly any section now wholly without its followers of Jesus Christ. Geographically the Gospel has gone to the ends of the earth."

4. How much—how much!—remains to be done, we will discuss elsewhere. Just now, we are concerned to see that the Holy Spirit, working through every nation, color, tongue or habit of thought, has carried forward the work that Christ began. It was indeed upon a rock that Christ built His church, and the gates of hell have not prevailed against it these two thousand years; nor shall they to the end. For long periods, the Spirit has found Himself baffled by the hardness of men's hearts and the stupidity of their minds. Often and often He has seen good and God-born impulses waste themselves in wrong channels of endeavor. Always He has had to work against institutions, moulds of thought and customs which have operated to crush the life out of the souls of men. But always, through one means or another, He has carried forward the work which shall not be done until every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Are you letting Him do His work through you?

Questions for Review and Discussion

1. Give the five main divisions of this Chapter, and tell one important fact about each.
2. Give some characteristics of the early Christians. Which of those you have named can you honestly say are possessed by the Christians whom you know? By yourself?

3. Tell, about the rapid spread of Christianity,
 - (a) Why it spread so rapidly.
 - (b) What effect persecution had on it.
 - (c) How far it had spread by the end of the first century.
4. In what ways did the "Holy Catholic Church" depart, in your opinion, from the Christianity which Jesus instituted and the apostles and early Christians preached.
5. Name at least two valuable contributions to civilization and Christianity which the Catholic church made during the "Dark Ages."
6. What, in your opinion, is the most striking difference between the Catholic and the Protestant missionary method? Illustrate.
7. What were some results of the long conflict between Catholicism and Protestantism?
8. Why, in your opinion, did the Holy Spirit find more opportunity to work through Protestants?
9. What is the significance of the dates, "1492-1792"?
10. What do *you* mean by the Modern Missionary Movement? When did it begin? What are some of its characteristics? Some of its results?

CHRIST IN THE WORLD

SUGGESTIONS FOR THIRD DAY'S MEETING

Opening Hymn: "Fling Out the Banner." One Verse.

Wait on the Lord: Silent prayer. Sentence Prayers.

Announcements. Announcement of Topic: Christ in the Orient.

Introduction: Christianity an Oriental Religion.

Christianity the Universal Religion.

Hymn: "Fling Out the Banner." Second Verse.

Study: Christ in Japan.

Prayer: For our missionaries in Japan, by name.

For the 270,000 Japanese Christians in a population of 70,000,000.

For our Baptist Churches and Church members.

For our schools and our Good-Will Center.

For Mr. Kagawa and all to whom he ministers; for his helpers and all the Christian forces engaged in the Church of God Movement.

For the unsaved of Japan.

For the peaceful and Christian settlement of all national and international problems.

Hymn: "Fling Out the Banner." Third Verse.

Study: Christ in China.

Prayer: For the great Chinese nation.

For all who have in their hands China's destiny.

For the Christian schools, hospitals and medical centers.

For the Chinese Christians.

For our overburdened missionaries.

For better understanding and feeling amongst the races and nations of the world.

For the Chinese and Japanese in this country; and that we may be faithful to show them Christ.

Hymn: "Fling Out the Banner." Fourth Verse.

Study: Christ in India.

Prayer: For the hungry of all the world, and especially in India.

For the soul-hungry of India, that they may receive the Bread of Life.

That the Spirit of Christ be revealed in all its power and purity to Indian hearts.

For all the forces that make for social righteousness in India.

Hymn: "Fling Out the Banner." Fifth Verse.

Scripture in Unison: Matt. 28:18, 19, 20; Luke 12:42b-44a; 48a.

Prayer: That we may be faithful to the trust.

(Poster or Blackboard Suggestion)

SOUTHERN BAPTISTS

IN

CHINA

NORTH CHINA MISSION

9 Stations.
69 Schools.
Evangelistic Bands and Volunteer Work.
7 Hospitals.
Christian Institute.
61 Missionaries.

INTERIOR CHINA MISSION

4 Stations.
9 Schools.
Good-will Center.
5 Hospitals. (Had to borrow nurses from Lutherans and Methodists.)
27 Missionaries.

CENTRAL CHINA MISSION

6 Stations.
20 Schools (including University of Shanghai—College and Seminary—with Northern Baptists.)
China Baptist Publication Society.
Farmers' Bible School.
Good-will Centers.
Baptist Summer Assembly.
61 Missionaries.

SOUTH CHINA MISSION

8 Stations.
36 Schools.
Book Room.
Home for Blind Girls (self-supporting).
Orphanage (supported by Chinese).
2 Theological Seminaries.
3 Hospitals.
47 Missionaries.

PAKHOI MISSION

1 Station.
3 Preaching Stations.
2 Missionaries.

JAPAN

Work In 7 Centers

2 Missionaries Fukuoka.

(Boys' Schools)

4 " Kokura.

(Girls' School)

1 " Nagasaki.

3 " Shimonoseki

2 " Hiroshima

2 " Tokyo

1 " Tobata

(Good-will Center)

15

4 Kindergartens.

2 "Middle Schools."

1 College.

1 Theological Seminary.

16 Churches.

4 Churches. Self-supporting.

7 Out-Station.

140 Baptisms.

10 Ordained Ministers.

10 Unordained Workers.

2,803 Church Members.

\$20,478.43 Native Contributions.

Almost \$10 Per Capita Gifts.

N.B.—These are *samples* of work done, not a complete list. Add in *All Missions* W.M.U. Work, Young People's Work, and Evangelism unceasing.

CHRIST IN THE WORLD

CHAPTER III

CHRIST IN THE ORIENT

- I. INTRODUCTION.
 - 1. Christianity an Oriental Religion.
 - 2. Christianity the Universal Religion.
- II. CHRIST IN JAPAN.
 - 1. Outline of Westernizing of Japan.
 - 2. Missionary influences in Japan.
 - 3. Japan today.
 - 4. Some Japanese Apostles.
 - Neesima.
 - Kanamori.
 - Kagawa.
- III. CHRIST IN CHINA.
 - 1. Early missionary effort.
 - 2. Opening China to the West.
 - (a) Political piracy.
 - (b) Missionary brotherliness.
 - 3. How Christ meets China's needs.
- IV. CHRIST IN INDIA.
- V. CONCLUSION.
 - 1. The "Laymen's Report."
 - 2. The Christian steward's task remains.

"And Jesus came to them and spake unto them, saying, All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."—Matt. 28:18-20.

I. INTRODUCTION

The religion which we profess is an Oriental faith. Jesus was an Eastern Jew, speaking almost wholly during His lifetime to Eastern Jews. The first great gains to Christianity were probably among people whose hearts had been in a manner prepared by other Oriental religions : the mystery cults.

But this is to speak *humanly*. The religion of Jesus Christ, Son of Man and Son of God, is as wide as the human race, as deep as the heart of man, and as boundless as the love of the Father. One of the great barriers in the way of the Orient's accepting Christianity has always been that they regarded it as part of "Western Civilization." What joy to be able to tell them the truth : that it came to us out of the East, and we are only bringing it back to them.

For it is the Universal Christ who speaks to us all. His message is to the hearts of all men everywhere ; his transforming power is seen over society and individuals all round the globe ; He is making over the world wherever the Holy Spirit is allowed to work, East or West.

What are some of the things which, in our time, the Spirit has accomplished in the Orient ?

II. CHRIST IN JAPAN

1. When Commander Perry, in 1853-4, partly persuaded and partly forced Japan to open her long-closed doors to the nations of the world, her people were living under somewhat the same conditions, social, governmental, and intellectual, under which our ancestors lived, say in 1300. In the just eighty years since, the Japanese have passed through or skipped over stages of progress which it took us six hundred or so years to accomplish. Today she is one of the most thoroughly educated nations of the world, thoroughly modern in her outlook, her institutions, her ambitions, and her problems.

2. Very early (as early as 1550) some efforts were made to take Christianity to Japan. For whatever reason, the religion was not welcome. We have all heard of the famous Imperial Edict which declared that if any Christian, or Jesus Christ, or the God of the Christians himself, dared show his face in Japan, he would be beheaded. For several centuries this edict was supposed to be in force. Through all those years, any who dared name the name of Christ were permitted to glorify God through suffering and death by crucifixion, fire or sword.

Even after the ports were open to foreign trade, representatives of the foreigners' religion were frowned upon. It was not until 1873 that the boards containing the famous edict were ordered taken down throughout the empire. But tactful, indomitable messengers of the Cross had long been secretly at work, and so the response then was immediate and wonderful. Missionaries poured in; converts declared themselves on every hand. By 1881 there were approximately twenty-eight thousand Japanese Christians.

3. For a while, in their enthusiasm over the new Western influences, it looked as though Japan were going to adopt Christianity wholesale. We have seen those "wholesale" movements before! Ere long a reaction set in. Of late years it has seemed as though Japan has swallowed all of Western civilization except just that leaven of the spirit of Christ which redeems it from absolute destruction. Today she seems on the road to "gain the whole world" at the cost of her soul. Her religion is a blind and pitiless nationalism, no less heathen for having been copied from the "Christian" nations. Socially, she has all the problems of the West: slums, starvation wages, all the concentrated human misery and vice that go with modern industrialism at its worst, and all the human dissatisfaction and unrest which is abroad in the world today. Intellectually she has drifted—marched, rather—into all the barren modern "isms." The picture looks dark, indeed.

But we must not forget the other side. There are the thous-

ands of liberal-hearted men and women—the young Emperor included, even though he does seem swamped at present by the militarists in his government—who have taken the best instead of the worst in Western civilization, and who are working unceasingly for the true good of their country. There are the thousands of Christ's men and women, quietly and heroically living out the salvation of their country, morally, socially, spiritually.

4. One of the most interesting things about Japanese Christianity is the mighty heroes who have even in this short time arisen among them. Neesima, Kanamori, Kagawa—these are names known wherever the progress of Christ in the world is dear to the hearts of men; and these are only three. They show what Christ can do with Japanese, and what Japan can contribute to the cause of Christ.

It was in 1858 that a sixteen-year-old boy in Yedo (Tokyo) borrowed an atlas of the United States and so learned something of the world outside Japan. Next he borrowed a Chinese Bible, and pored over it in secret, for his noble family refused to allow him corrupting outside influences. But his hunger for truth and God triumphed over all difficulties. He stowed away on a ship to Shanghai; he sold one of his two Samurai swords to buy an English Bible; he worked his way to Boston, where he found friends and an education; and, having refused most flattering offers to serve his own government in the United States, he stood before a great audience with tears running down his cheeks, while he said, "I must have money to start a Christian school in Japan; and *I am going to stand here until I get it!*" This is a kaleidoscopic outline of the life of Joseph Hardy Neesima, who in the sacred Buddhist city of Kyoto founded the great Doshisha University.

Amongst the earliest students of Neesima's school were six boys who had been converted by their Christian teacher in a military school at Kumamoto. These boys had pledged themselves to preach the Gospel to their people if it should cost them

their lives ; and some had already paid the price. This was the famous "Kumamoto Band." Foremost among them was Paul Kanamori. He felt the call to evangelize, and gave his life telling the Gospel story to great crowds who had never before heard it. He devised his own way of doing this. He put the whole Gospel, as it presented itself to him, into one sermon three hours long. This sermon he preached over and over, never twice in the same place. During four years, he preached it eight hundred times, and reached more than three hundred thousand people with the message. This was another of Christ's Japanese Apostles.

And in our day, there is Kagawa. The sensitive, precocious boy, in the providence of God, came under the influence of a great Presbyterian missionary and at the age of fourteen found Christ. When he announced his determination to be one of Christ's messengers, his family disinherited him ; during his brilliant career at the theological seminary he developed tuberculosis and spent a year "recuperating" in a fishing village where he did all his own work, lived on half his meager allowance so as to feed others with the rest, became the spiritual advisor and practical helper of all his neighbors, wrote a novel which later became a Japanese best-seller, received his inspiration for his life work, and recovered of his disease !

Before he graduated from the Seminary, quietly, against the advice and almost prayers of his teachers and other friends, he moved from the comfortable dormitory into what was perhaps the worst slum in Japan. Simply, he lived Christ among these people who needed a Saviour so much.

We cannot trace his career, which is more interesting than the most exciting novel. Today, he is regarded by the Japanese Government as perhaps the best authority on industrial conditions in Japan, and he has been largely the cause of every legislative and social reform in that land. He is regarded by Christians the world over as one of the outstanding Christ's—men of our generation. When he speaks, men, denominations, nations, listen.

While Japanese Christianity produces such leaders, we may well think hopefully of the progress of the cause of Christ in Japan. There, too, some day, He will reign.

III. CHRIST IN CHINA

1. Let us turn from Japan, so modern, to China, oldest and most unchanging of all peoples on the face of the globe.

As early as the year 334 we have traces of Christian missionaries who penetrated to this vast Eastern civilization. Then between 1000 and 1500, Nestorian and Catholic missionaries carried the message to the great pagan empire. The rulers during this time were the picturesque Great Khans—Ghengis and Khubla and the rest—who so stirred the imagination of Europe. It was in the thirteenth century that the ruling Khan held a parliament of religions to which he invited Christians, Moham-medans and Buddhists, to argue the merits of their faiths. At the conclusion of the conference, the Emperor declared that “as God has given the hand several fingers, so He has prepared for men various ways by which they may go to heaven”; and he also said, significantly, that though “God has given the Gospel to the Christians, they do not obey it.” That seems to have been the obstacle in the way of Christ’s Kingdom through the centuries! The Catholic church in this old day of which we speak might have made a large impression on the Empire of the Khans, for one of those rulers sent a request to the Pope for one hundred learned men to instruct the people in western knowledge and in the Christian religion. But at that time the Church was entangled in a maze of Ecclesiastical politics, and had no time or thought for a great missionary enterprise. In time a wave of nationalism wept over the land, and Christianity was practically wiped out for two centuries.

2. The story of the opening of China to Western interests in the nineteenth century is one which should make every Westerner, Christian or not, blush and hang his head. We cannot

tell it here: how by wars and injustice, by brute force and trickery, the reluctant and resentful empire was forced to open her doors to the Western powers. Frequent outbreaks of violence culminated in the terrible Boxer uprising in 1900. Though the end of this was complete victory for the Western nations, the first good to China and the Cause of Christ in China, came of it. The conscience of the "Christian" nations was in some measure aroused by their own greed and tyranny. There began to grow a demand for fair play for China; and in spite of much continued injustice and aggression, that spirit is growing, and has had its effect.

In striking contrast to the methods and spirit of the political and commercial adventurers, has been that of the adventurers for Christ. The first modern missionary to China is the Englishman, Robert Morrison. Arriving in China in 1807, he spent twenty-seven years laying well and true the foundations for all future missionary work. He translated the entire Bible into the Chinese language: a language so difficult for foreigners that an old Jesuit missionary once said it was invented by the devil expressly to keep the Gospel from reaching the Chinese! It was seven years before Morrison baptized his first convert, and at his death he could count them on the fingers of his hands. But every soul in China who has found Christ since owes something to this giant pioneer.

3. The tale of the many missionary enterprises in China is a fascinating one, which has been told elsewhere. Let us see now if we can discover in what ways Christ, through His messengers, has changed this people of ancient culture, and how He is meeting her needs of today.

First and fundamental, *Christ has changed the hearts and lives of thousands of Chinese*. His religion has done for men and women there what it always does for men and women anywhere who accept Him and surrender to Him: it has set them free. Free of their false and harmful beliefs. Free of their hampering customs. Free of their sinful lives. There are in

China today "third-generation"—perhaps even "fourth-generation"—Christians who, themselves and their fathers and mothers before them, have walked in the glorious liberty of the children of God.

Then the missionaries are directly responsible for the tremendous change in the educational system of China. China has always been a "cultured" country; but the old culture was available only to the very few. By their system, it was a lifetime job for a man to acquire the written wisdom of the ancients. The mission schools opened new worlds to hundreds of people who would never have had a chance at the old knowledge. Chinese began to appreciate the new methods. To make a long story short, she is now making strenuous efforts toward a modern system of Government schools. Just now, some of these efforts serve to work a hardship on the faithful mission schools; but the most forward-looking and useful of these are quietly adapting themselves to the situation, thus serving China and Christ in their generation.

Medical missions were almost the first form of Christian service which the Chinese would tolerate. No wonder, with the gruesome medical practises of the old Chinese doctors! The missionary doctors and nurses showing the way, China is waking up; but it is still a dangerous occupation to live in China! Doubly dangerous, for our missionaries and their children, as well as for the Chinese, now that medical mission work has been cut so tragically. In time, China will have her own doctors, nurses and hospitals; but that day is still well ahead; meantime, as in the past, the ambassadors of the Great Physician must lead the way.

Perhaps the most significant contribution made to the nation by Christ's representatives is the preparation of China for her new day. "When did the Chinese revolutionary movement begin?" someone asked a Chinese statesman; and he replied, "The day Robert Morrison landed in Canton." It was the missionaries who brought into China a new spirit which was

bound to produce a new day. It is safe to say that China has changed more in one generation than she had before in many thousand years. Naturally, the changes have brought trouble, confusion, violence, misunderstandings. There seems to be no growth in this world without "growing pains." Some aspects of this change have made mission work very hard in recent years. In addition to multiplied problems on the outside, the spirit of independence within the Chinese churches brings its problems. Such a spirit is encouraged by the wise-hearted missionaries, and the difficulties growing out of it are handled with patience, forbearance and understanding. The Chinese Christians, the Chinese nation, have a long way to go yet. But the liberating spirit of Christ will not cease to operate. With reverent joy, we may continue to have a part in helping the Holy Spirit until He has brought this great fourth of the whole world's people into the family of God.

IV. CHRIST IN INDIA

How we wish we had space to speak of this subject! India, oldest of all mission fields, for romantic tradition says that the Apostle Thomas went there and gave his life to that land as its first missionary. India, oldest of modern mission fields, for Carey, the father of the modern missionary movement, gave his life there, also, India, so strange to the Western mind, so contradictory, so fascinating. India, with her seeking heart, her manifold sorrows, her superstitions, her immemorial wisdom! India, so much in the world's eye today!

But we must hurry on, leaving only this word, in regard to India's problems: (Carver, *Course of Christian Missions*) "If Mahatma Ghandi is a prophet and more than a prophet, he is none the less a national prophet. . . . When India has followed Ghandi to his goal, she will turn still to Jesus 'seeking yet a country'."

V. CONCLUSION

1. Last year there appeared a report on missionary methods and message, prepared by a group of laymen who had spent three years studying the mission fields of the Orient. This report, a three hundred and fifty page volume called "Rethinking Missions," ought to stir us all. Its conclusions are not accepted by any board or any missionary of whom I have heard, and to take two outstanding examples—Toyohiko Kagawa of Japan and E. Stanley Jones of India, have written articles expressing grave concern over the fact that the laymen, in their anxiety about modern methods and philosophies, have left out the heart of missions, which is the Gospel of Christ. However, both these great Christian statesmen, with others, make plain that this volume is capable of doing great good if it stirs up the Christians of the world to think about, and to care about, their missionary task.

2. The great danger to the mission cause in our time is not the danger of heresy among the missionaries. It is not the danger of wrong motives and methods on the mission fields. The great danger is the danger of indifference; of lapsed stewardship on the part of the Christians at home.

In this period of study we have tried to see, as in a panorama, some of the marvelous changes wrought in the changeless East by the liberating Spirit of Christ. It is our task and our privilege to set free that Spirit for still more marvelous achievements. "Who then is the faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall set over his household, to give them their portion . . . in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. . . . And to whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required."

Questions for Discussion and Investigation

1. What do we mean when we call Christianity an Oriental religion?

2. In what way is Christianity the universal religion?
3. Tell briefly how Japan was opened to western influence.
4. How many missionaries have Southern Baptists in Japan? Name four, and tell something about the work of one.
5. Name three great Japanese Christians, and tell something about one of them.
6. Was any mission work done in China before the modern mission era? Tell something about it.
7. Tell four ways in which Christianity has influenced China.
8. How many Missions have Southern Baptists in China? Do you know anything about the work of any missionary in China? If so, tell about it.
9. Do Southern Baptists do missionary work in India? What Baptists do?
10. What do you know of Ghandi and in what ways do you consider him significant? Can Ghandi save India? What and whom must she have?

CHRIST IN THE WORLD

SUGGESTIONS FOR FOURTH DAY'S MEETING

Hymn: "Jesus Calls Us."

Scripture in Unison: Matt. 28:18-20; Luke 12:42b-44a; 48a.

Discussion: Meaning of these two sayings of Jesus in relation to our present day lives.

Prayer: For guidance in our studies of the hour, and in our lives of the day.

Announcements; Introduction.

Hymn: "Jesus Shall Reign." Verses One and Two.

Study (with blackboard or poster): Progress of Organized Christianity.

Sentence Prayers: For our nation, our churches, ourselves.

Hymn: "O Beautiful for Spacious Skies."

Study: Progress of Christian Ideals: 1. Between man and man.

Discussion: What can *I* do to help?

Study: Progress of Christian Ideals: 2. Between nation and nation.

Discussion: What can *I* do to help?

Study: Progress of Christian Ideals: 3. Between race and race.

Discussion: What can *I* do to help?

Prayers: For the negroes with all their problems.
(To be assigned ahead.)

For the races in their relation to one another.

For world peace and good will, and every agency working for it.

For the abolishing of evil influences in the lives of our children.

For justice and liberty to all in our land.

For ourselves, that we may be better stewards.

Discussion: The Social Service Commission Report, Southern Baptist Convention Minutes.

Hymn: "Jesus Shall Reign." Verses Three and Four.

Study: Conclusions.

Silent Prayer. Dismissal.

(Blackboard Suggestion)

Population Increase in United States Since 1900....65.8%
 Church Membership Increase in United States
 Since 1900 82.8%

CONVERSIONS IN 1932

Church Members in the United States.....60,886,445
 Church Members Gained..... 1,088,594
 Church Members Gained, Twenty-five Largest
 Protestant Bodies..... 921,941
 Church Members Gained, Baptist Bodies..... 347,356
 Church Members Gained, Southern Baptists.... 121,574

(This is the largest net gain made by Southern Baptists since 1923. Largest number of baptisms ever reported, 226,855.)

GIFTS IN 1932

Per Capita Gifts of All Church Members for All
 Causes\$19.32
 Per Capita Gifts of All Church Members for Mis-
 sions 3.12
 Per Capita Gifts of Southern Baptists for All
 Causes 6.72
 Per Capita Gifts of Southern Baptists for Missions 1.22

My

Gifts for All Causes..... ?
 Gifts for Missions ?
 Income ?

CHRIST IN THE WORLD

CHAPTER IV

CHRIST IN THE OCCIDENT

- I. INTRODUCTION.
- II. PROGRESS OF ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY IN THE UNITED STATES.
- III. PROGRESS OF CHRISTIAN IDEALS IN THE WESTERN WORLD.
 - 1. Between man and man.
 - 2. Between nation and nation.
 - 3. Between race and race.
- IV. CONCLUSIONS.

“Who then is the faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall set over his household, to give them their portion . . . in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. . . . And to whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required.” Luke 12:42b-44a; 48a.

I. INTRODUCTION

While the Gospel of Christ, as carried by His representatives from the West, has been accomplishing such marvels in the East, what changes has that Gospel been bringing to pass in the West itself?

It is much easier to get a view of a far landscape than of our own house and grounds; and when we look for evidences of the Holy Spirit's work close at home, we are bewildered by the many details which we would need to consider in any adequate discussion of the subject. Let us, then, not attempt the impossible task of trying to find every work of the Holy Spirit in all the western world; but, limiting ourselves to only two aspects

of His work as it touches our own immediate lives, see what progress numerically Organized Christianity has made in our own land ; and what gains the Christian spirit has made in relations between men, nations and races.

II. PROGRESS OF ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY IN THE UNITED STATES

From the days of the first colonists, our land has been a mission field ; it will always be so. The form of the task changes ; the task itself, never. For every soul must come in its generation into saving knowledge of the Son of God ; how then, with our population steadily increasing, shall the missionary need ever grow less ?

The Lutheran statistician, Dr. G. L. Kieffer, each year compiles statistics on the denominations of America ; which statistics are used by other statisticians, including our Dr. Alldredge of the Sunday School Board. His tables show that during the depression year, 1932, nearly a million new souls have sought peace and salvation within the churches of our land. The churches of the United States now have a membership of over sixty million people thirteen years of age and over. This great group, however, includes churches of every kind from "Communitic" to Mormons, in addition to Christian bodies. We are naturally concerned about the gains made by our own people ; and it rejoices us to find that about nine-tenths of the whole gain was made by the twenty-five largest Protestant bodies. It gives us an added thrill, and a deeper sense of responsibility, to find that the largest gain of all was made by Baptists, and a bit over a third of this gain was made by Southern Baptists.

Another striking fact brought out in Dr. Kieffer's figures is that, from 1900 on, the growth in church membership in our country has steadily gone ahead of the growth in population. When we remember, however, that the last census gave us over

one hundred twenty-five million people in our country, of which number at least two-thirds must be "of the age of accountability," we are faced with millions of lost souls in our own land. Nay, we do not need to look so far. Each of us in her own community knows of many who are still without Christ. The Church's business is still pressing in this "Christian" land.

Still another set of figures bids us pause. The gifts of this vast army of church members for the year 1932 were not quite twenty dollars apiece: a decrease over the gifts for the preceeding year, as might have been expected. But the gifts to benevolences, including all forms of missions, were only three dollars and twelve cents per capita. This is low enough, but what are our feelings when we look at our Southern Baptist record to find that, now when our Boards are so hampered for lack of funds, our per capita gift was the large sum of one dollar and twenty-two cents! Surely we need to awake to our stewardship! A secular paper commented, in regard to these figures, that people always rush into the churches during times of hardship, and that the impulse is a selfish one. We might reply that one must always first find salvation for himself before he can impart it to others. But we must, as Christ's men and women, realize, and teach these babes in Christ, that they are "Saved for Something," in the good old motto of a by-gone day: they are "Saved to Serve." That is the only road by which they—and we!—will find the salvation which they seek; it is as true for them and for us as it was for that young man who came running to ask the man Jesus, "Good teacher, what shall I do that I may obtain eternal life?"

III. PROGRESS OF CHRISTIAN IDEALS

1. Church membership never saved anybody yet; and imposing figures of church membership are no evidence that a land is Christian. What we have to ask ourselves is: what of our everyday lives, and the relationships between men and men in this world: are they becoming any more Christian?

The long history of mankind seems from some points of view to be the story of men's mistreatment of men. From the days of Cain onward, men have killed, directly or indirectly, for gain, and have cried to accusing conscience which was the voice of their accusing God, "Am I my brother's keeper?" It is only in what we call modern times that the answer to that question is more and more recognized to be, "Yes!"

In the old days, relationships between different people were comparatively simple. In our increasingly complex modern life, we find our lives touching others almost every minute of the day, in our work and in our play. We think of "labor questions" as something far removed from us. Then we pick up the paper and find that groups of our near neighbors are concerned. We agree, vaguely, that "they" ought to do something about sweat shops, killing hours of work, child labor and the like. Then we come to see that *we* are our brothers' keepers here. Not only do *we* make the laws; *we* employ helpers; *we* buy the products of our brothers' and sisters' labor; *we* demand the service which makes the conditions of business and manufacturing. What about that bargain dress of which you were so proud? Did its price mean that some girl, stinted of her wages after a killing day's work, hungry, walked the streets that night? What about the hours and wages in your favorite bargain grocery stores? What about the living conditions of the mill workers in your neighborhood? The tenant farmers? The negro groups, your cook and washerwoman included? You have no right to interfere in the management of your neighbor's business, of course. Have you a right to patronize businesses which kill, slowly or quickly, wholly or partially, other neighbors? Have you a right, or your family, or your group, to demand the results of other people's labor at such prices and under such conditions that they *cannot* live decently?

A great thinker and speaker said at Ridgecrest that all problems in our modern world: the industrial problems, the war problems, the social problems, would be settled if the people

involved could be made Christian. He illustrated and amplified his statement. With due deference to his great mind and the point he was making, I think this is only partially true; because the most serious of problems and difficulties and injustices have occurred between people who were perfectly honest Christians. We must all confess that none of us is *wholly* Christian, Christian in *all* our relationships and attitudes. Are you? It is not enough, in our day, for a Christian to be blameless in personal life, doctrine and actions. It is not enough for a Christian to be a steward of time, money and personality. A Christian in our day must also be a steward of his,—her—intelligence, her social attitudes, her sources of information and her conscience!

A Christian must be a steward of his industrial relationships and his working hours. He must also be a steward of his play hours, his amusement life. Here, too, "Am I my brother's keeper?"

All the more gaudy sins of our day seem to be somehow connected with this side of life. And while we can see definite gains in the Christianization of industrial relationships, the play, or social, relationships sometimes seem to be going from bad to worse! We may mention three: "the Movies," drinking, and gambling.

In regard to that universal pastime, the moving pictures, we fail not only as our brother's keepers, but as the keepers of our own children! Recently a scientific study of the effect of moving pictures on children and adolescents has been published in both book and pamphlet form. By all means get it; never again after reading it, I am persuaded, will you send your child off to the movies without knowing *what* he is going to see. Yes, we all do it; it's such an easy way to entertain them! And so their whole conception of life is spoiled, because you and I are too lazy to check on what they are seeing. A National Film Estimate service makes a week by week report which you can get, which tells all you need to know about the pictures; if enough

of us, for our own children's sakes, would only see that our families spent no money on any but the fine and wholesome pictures, we could make over that highly commercial industry without even trying. Is there any excuse for our not doing it?

Our generation is squarely up against the mighty problem of the drinking evil. All of us are awake to the chaos which now prevails. Some of us need to reawaken to the treachery and cruelty of that outlaw trade which has practically subsidized certain branches of our government, and which will stop at nothing to accomplish its heartless purpose. If national prohibition is swept away, it is our task to build again; and this time to build more wisely, stronger and more securely the great dam which shall, in the name of Christ and every decent impulse of mankind, save countless thousands of souls and lives from being swept to utter ruin.

Perhaps the most subtle and widespread evil of our time is the gambling spirit. It has wrecked our national "prosperity" and now, on the eve of recovery is making its sinister presence powerful again; it extends through every class and form of our American life.

Are you inclined to draw your spiritual skirts about you with the reflection, "True, but that has nothing to do with me. I don't gamble!" What about your local ten-cent store with its Saturday "lucky-number" drawing to get the crowds? What about the slip your friend the grocery manager (who is also a deacon in your church), gives you with your dollar purchase, with instructions to save it, it might get the prize? The spirit of the gambler is the spirit which wants something for nothing, not stopping to consider that that something costs somebody, if the gambler does not pay for value received. It is the same spirit whether it involves ten cents or ten thousand dollars; and it is directly in opposition to the spirit of one who came "among you as one that serves." The Spirit of Christ cannot triumph as long as His servants compromise with that spirit, which is the spirit of Mammon.

There are laws to curb all these evils of social life, as well as the evils of industrial life. They were put there, every one, by long, hard, unselfish fighting on the part of some people. They are kept there and enforced only through constant watchfulness on the part of every citizen who answers "yes" to the question, "Am I my brother's keeper?" But laws will never bring the Spirit of Christ into operation in our world; they were never meant to. They only make possible conditions where that Spirit may have a chance. They are only an indication that Our God is marching on, in realtions between men and men. Are we keeping step with Him?

2. He is marching on in the relations between nation and nation, and the progress of the cause of peace. We say this in the face of the knowledge that there are today more men under arms in "civilized" countries than fought in the World War. We say it though all conferences and leagues for disarmament and peace seem to have failed. Some day, they will not fail. When enough people want peace, there will be peace between nation and nation; and more people are actively wanting peace today than ever before in the history of the world. To the last Disarmament Conference were sent petitions from *two hundred million* people who were interested enough to write about it. It is in deference to this great and growing spirit that nations must now find all sorts of disguises for going to war; and the time draws near, please God, when such disguises will not serve. A machinery of international justice will some day be perfected; the vision which this war-weary earth has glimpsed so long will be accomplished.

3. So, too, the Spirit of Christ is stirring up a better spirit among the races of the world. There was a time when practically every European and American believed simply and uncritically in the "supremacy of the white race." Now there is no Christian who thinks and reads at all, who will confess to such a belief out loud, however much we may act as though we still held it. It is gradually penetrating the consciousness of us all that "God has made of one family every nation."

What this consciousness will mean to the world yet remains to be seen. We have only made a start in the right direction; but the fact that a start has been made means that we can go forward. There are many groups, inter-racial commissions, and so on, in every state working at our own particular problem of race relationship, and every such organization should have the fullest help and encouragement from you and me. But here again we must realize that the problem will be settled rightly, not by commissions and resolutions and laws, but by the Christianizing of the attitude of you and of me in our contacts with other races. Someone said that most of us stop with "good-will" and never get to "justice" in our social attitudes! But Christ came to set justice in the earth. Are you and I willing to be just, at our own expense if necessary, (as sometimes it will be), in our relations with the Mexicans, the Chinese, the Negroes, who touch our daily lives? If so, then the Kingdom of Christ can thus far come in us.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

So, as we have seen all through this study, the Holy Spirit carries on His work in the world through various channels. Some of the movements for righteousness which we have discussed in this chapter were started, and have been carried on, entirely outside Christ's churches, sometimes even in the face of opposition from the representatives of those churches. Browning in "The Ring and the Book" gives an unforgettable picture of the medieval Church's attitude toward torture; how, when the common people and the legal representatives at last said, "This thing is stupid and useless; cruel too; let's have no more of it!" the Church said, "Ah yes. I forgot!" That has been too often a picture of the Church's attitude toward social reforms in the past. But every one of the great causes here all denominations. In most, the followers of Jesus lead the indicated receives support in some measure from practically way. What our own people are doing we may judge from the

report of the Social Service Commission made to the Convention in Washington last May, and printed in the Minutes, pp. 104-118. Read it, paying special attention to those paragraphs on Lynching, International Relations and World Peace, Our Great Battle, Activities of the Commission, and Recommendations. E. McNeill Poteat, of Raleigh, North Carolina, offered this amendment, which, adopted, marks a definite forward step in the assumption by our denomination of its responsibility for our brothers in our own land. "Believing that the time has come for a more comprehensive and direct dealing with the great social issues in the South, we move that a committee be appointed to consider the advisability of creating an agency of Social Research in connection with the Social Service Commission to study these pressing social problems, and to furnish as far as possible guidance for the definite work of the Convention in this field."

Our complicated modern life has carried the fight between Christ and the devil on to battlefields of which our fathers never dreamed. Whatever they may have done in the middle ages, we cannot save our souls today without saving our lives; we cannot save our lives at the expense of other lives; and we cannot save our lives wholly while other lives are condemned, by the circumstances under which they are lived, to partial or total waste. That the Spirit of Christ may rule in the Occident, we must all learn to be *all* Christian.

The fact that we are beginning to realize how far our world fails to be Christian; how far we ourselves fail to be Christian, is perhaps the most hopeful "sign of the times" we have. In Chapter Two you found quoted a statement beginning thus: "We are at length coming to see that there are no longer any non-Christian lands." The second part of that statement follows: "But there is another reason why there are no longer for thoughtful men any non-Christian lands. It is because there are no 'Christian lands'. . . . It is only a question of degrees. Even where practically all the population, is, by the ideas and

methods prevailing, in the Church, there are very many who are not Christians. Furthermore, there are so many aspects of our life in all lands, so much of our institutional life and corporate activity not guided or controlled by the ideals of Christ and the motives of His Spirit that it is quite improper to speak of any country as Christian." (Carver Course of Christian Missions, p. 304.)

Ponder that paragraph well; then think this over: such a condition has always been true, but it is only in these latter years that Christians generally are realizing that it is true, and that we ought not to consent for it to be true. When the Crusaders went off to butcher Turks; when English merchant companies sailed away in the might of England to take India whole; when progressive manufacturers killed men, women and children by long hours and unsanitary working conditions at the beginning of the Industrial Age, they were generally regarded as excellent Christians, torch-bearers of civilization, apostles of progress. We have come a long way from such an attitude, after all.

And sometimes, when we realize so keenly the distance between the standards of the man Christ Jesus and our pitiful world; when the way seems long, and the task well-nigh impossible, it helps to look back over the years and see how far we have come. Then indeed we will raise our Ebenezer, saying, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." Then shall we go on in fresh courage, persuaded with Paul that "he who has begun a good work in us will go on to perfect it—for the day of Jesus Christ."

Questions for Discussion and Investigation

1. What reasons would you give for the great increase in church membership during the past year?
2. Fill out the last three lines in the statistical table. Are you satisfied with them? Have someone report on the per

capita gifts to all causes and to missions of your church; your State Convention.

3. Name three kinds of relationships between men where Christ's Spirit ought to prevail. Tell something that is being done for each.
4. What can you, personally, do about the Industrial Question? Social questions? Peace? The Race Question? Name one thing that you have ever done. Name one thing that you will do.
5. What do you consider a most hopeful sign of the progress of Christ's Spirit in the world?
6. On the whole, do you consider that the Spirit of Christ is gaining ground, or losing? Give definite reasons for your answer.

CHRIST IN THE WORLD

SUGGESTIONS FOR FIFTH DAY'S MEETING

Hymn: "Faith of Our Fathers."

Prayer: For our Home and Foreign Mission Boards, and all who feel the burden of responsibility for carrying of Christ's work.

Announcements.

Study: Review, and Survey.

Bible Study: Isaiah 40:28, 29; 41:4, 5; 55:8-11.

Study: Three Facts to Face.

Prayer: That God may awaken indifferent Christians.

Bible Study: Esther 4:13, 14.

Study: Call to Advance, Parts 1 and 2.

Hymn: "Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory."

Bible Study: . John 10:10b; 6:38, 39a; 5:17.
Isaiah 42:4.

Study: Call to Advance, Part 3.

Prayer: Lead on, O King Eternal.

CHRIST IN THE WORLD

CHAPTER V

THE UNDISCOURAGED CHRIST

- I. REVIEW : PROGRESS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT'S WORK IN THE WORLD.
- II. SURVEY : PRESENT MISSION SITUATION IN AMERICA.
- III. THREE FACTS TO FACE.
 1. God does not have to have Southern Baptists to save the world.
 2. God does want Southern Baptists' continued co-operation.
 3. If Southern Baptists lose their missionary spirit,—!
- IV. THE CALL TO ADVANCE.
 1. We shall be dedicated to a great enterprise.
 2. We shall be members of a great company.
 3. "Lead on, O King Eternal."

"Hast thou not known? Hast thou not heard? The everlasting God, Jehovah, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary; there is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint."—Isaiah 40:28, 29a.

"Who hath wrought and done it, calling the generations from the beginning? I, Jehovah, the first, and with the last, I am He. The isles have seen, and fear; the ends of the earth tremble; they draw near and come."—Isaiah 41:4, 5.

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith Jehovah. For as the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, and giveth seed to the sower and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return

unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.”—Isaiah 55:8-11.

“I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly.”—John 10:10b. “For I am come down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the will of him that sent me, that of all that which he hath given me I should lose nothing. . .”—John 6:38, 39a. “My Father worketh even until now, and I work.”—John 5:17.

“Then Mordecai bade them return answer to Esther ‘Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king’s house more than all the Jews. *For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then will relief and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place, but thou and thy father’s house will perish; and who knoweth whether thou art not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?*’”—Esther 4:13, 14.

“Behold, Jehovah’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither is his ear heavy, that it cannot hear.”—Isaiah 59:1. “*He will not fail, nor be discouraged, till he have set justice in the earth; and the isles shall wait for his law.*”—Isaiah 42:4.

I. REVIEW: PROGRESS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT’S WORK IN THE WORLD

In these days of study together, we have tried to make a wide survey of the work of the Holy Spirit down the ages since Christ started His great work. We have looked on the world to which Christ came, and seen how much, in its sin and cruelty, its ignorance and its hunger after righteousness, it needed Him. We have seen the Light of the World kindling fires of hope throughout that world, as His missionaries went from place to place. We have seen the mighty Roman Empire come under the sway of the King of Kings.

We have seen the barbarian hordes from the north—our ancestors—come down upon that Empire and accomplish its

fall; and we have seen how they themselves were led captive by their captives as gradually, dimly, in their crude and heathen way, they came under the sway of the Christian Church. We have seen how the followers of Christ were almost the only preservers, through the long night of the Dark Ages, of the precious things which had come down from the past: how they kept alive order, knowledge, peace and charity through those years of battle and groping and dark confusion.

We have seen also how the followers of Jesus lost the true light; how evils and errors crept in to make that which called itself the Holy Catholic Church unrecognizable as the church which Jesus built. We have seen how with a re-birth of the glorious adventuring spirit of man there arose more and more people who demanded a return to Christ and His way of life; and so the Reformation came on the heels of the Renaissance. We have seen how the Spirit of God wrought mightily in men in those days, and out of that conflict came our modern world, and our modern churches.

We have seen how the Holy Spirit did not rest, but drove men on from being concerned that the truth should be preserved in purity, to being concerned that the heathen also should know it. We have seen out of such concern the modern missionary movement rise, so like the first Apostolic movement. And we have seen how, as the fruit of that movement, the old world, east and west, has been transformed, and is being transformed from day to day.

II. SURVEY: THE PRESENT MISSION SITUATION IN AMERICA

Now we come to a period in this development at which we do not like to look. Nevertheless, we must look at it. Our leaders have been looking at it, long, long!—and with distress. The fact is, that for the last several years missionary zeal on the part of the denominations of the United States has been declin-

ing with sinister steadiness. Leaders have pleaded, warned, exhorted, tried to rouse us to a sense of shame—seemingly all in vain. This great missionary movement which began one hundred fifty years ago, which has accomplished such marvelous things for God in God's world, is in danger of slacking. And that with the work not half done, with opportunities opening out on every hand, and with the possibility of impressing Christianity on the life of the whole world great as never before.

Last year Dr. H. Paul Douglass sent out a questionnaire, (most popular of American indoor sports!) to some twelve thousand members of twenty-eight denominations in the United States. His purpose was to secure statements concerning their belief in the faiths and practises of their churches; he reports his findings in the *Christian Century* for April 12, 1933, in an article entitled, "Missions at the Crossroads." He says that there was less than ten per cent of dissent recorded "until one came to foreign missions! At this point fifty-one per cent of 1200 Christians stated in wrting, in the year of our Lord 1932, that they would hesitate or refuse to support the foreign missions of their own church!"

Does this shock us? It should not, if we have been interested enough to notice the successive retrenchments of our Boards, the steady falling off of support for our mission enterprises. It is rather more straightforward, but not one bit more emphatic, to say over one's signature in writing that one will not support foreign missions, than to say it by simple failure to do so. How long, asks Dr. Douglass, can such indifference continue without destroying the whole foreign mission work? "to end one of the most heroic adventures of the church by attrition would be tragic indeed. A great enterprise ought not to come to a conclusion so impotent and futile."

III. THREE FACTS TO FACE

In this study we have said practically nothing about our own people, Southern Baptists. We have been studying our mission work for years, and if we do not by now know about it, it is not for lack of opportunity. If here we have gained a larger view of the whole mission enterprise it should help us to appreciate still more the dignity and importance of our particular share in the task. And now we come home again : to face this problem as Southern Baptists ; as small groups called "missionary societies" ; as individuals. Are *we* going to fail the Holy Spirit?

Before we are ready to answer that, let us face three more facts :

1. The first of these is that *God does not have to have Southern Baptists in order to save the world*. Read your Isaiah again ! "Hast thou not known? Hast thou not heard?" It is God who is in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself ; He has been working at it six thousand years of which we have the recorded history ; it would be an impertinence to assume that He will stop because a few thousand—or a few million—of His servants in any given generation prove unfaithful to the task. If we do fail, and all the influential denominations of our day fail, He will raise up unto Himself servants who will accomplish His purpose. He has done it before. "If thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time," said wise old Mordecai to Esther, "then will relief and deliverance arise . . . from another place."

2. But the second fact we need to face is, that *God does want and need Southern Baptists' continued co-operation*. We cannot defeat God's redemptive purpose by our failure, but we can delay it. We cannot prevent the ultimate salvation of mankind, but we can make it certain that uncounted thousands of people for whom Christ died will go to their graves without a saving knowledge of Him. It is an awful thought.

3. The third fact we must face is this : *if Southern Baptists*

lose our missionary spirit we may save our denominational life, but we will surely lose our denominational soul. If we, after a history filled with glorious missionary achievement, now give up the fight, God will raise up a people through whom the Holy Spirit can carry on his work; but from our denominational life the glory and the meaning will have departed. "That is unthinkable," you say? It has happened. It happened to the Jews. It has happened to other groups of God's people. We need look no farther afield than to our brothers in the faith, the Primitive Baptists. When we parted company from them over this very matter, more than a hundred years ago, we went the way of life, as "Missionary Baptists"; while they have walked the path of stagnation and death. Is the day coming for another parting of the ways?

IV. THE CALL TO ADVANCE

What, then, shall we do? The answer is, that in the Name of God we shall GO FORWARD.

Does the great sea of indifference among our people distress and appall us? It should distress us, but not appall. "They that are with us are more than they that are with them." Do we waste time casting wistful glances toward the dollars of our (calculated 62%) unenlisted? Let us waste no more time so, but, remembering what God has always done with His dedicated minorities, set our hearts and strength joyously to the task.

Perhaps we ourselves have been part of that vast sea of indifference. Oh, we have given—"within reason"; we have prayed—perhaps; we have been faithful members of our local missionary society, with much more emphasis on the local than on the missionary. But our hearts have never really gone out to the men and women who need Christ as we need Him—to complete their lives and give them meaning. Our souls have never agonized and thrilled over the sacrifices and the rewards

of the missionaries. We have never considered ourselves equally responsible with them for the salvation of the heathen, nor used our possessions like faithful stewards, for our Master's business. If that is so, shall we not today open our hearts to the vision of what God is doing in the world, and what He will do through us if we will let Him?

Such a dedication will mean that we must leave the ranks of "Comfortable Christians." But consider the rewards that shall be ours!

1. *We shall be dedicated to a great enterprise: the great enterprise of the ages.* Look across the world and consider the scope of mission work; look back, and consider its history; look ahead, and consider its final goal: is not this a task worth giving one's life to? Think what this great movement, growing in power and volume with the years, has accomplished! It has transformed thousands of commonplace lives into heroic ones. It has spread physical health and the hope of a bearable life among multitudes who but for its influence would have lived all their days in unspeakable misery and squalor. It has opened the eyes of the blind physically, mentally, spiritually. It has fostered international understanding, fairness and good will; changed immemorial customs, and been largely instrumental in fashioning a new world ideal and world spirit. And first, last, and all the time, it has gone with the knowledge of the Son of God to the lost millions of the world to save them, for this life and the life to come. Who would not wish to be a partner in such a work as that?

2. *Then, we shall be members of a great company.* We shall take our places beside the heroic souls of all time who have given themselves to be used of God in His redemptive purpose: who could move in a more select circle than that?

We shall not mind if we seem to be in the minority. Should you not rather be in the minority with Moses, than with the grumbling slaves whom he saved almost in spite of themselves?

When Gideon flung his small band against the hosts of Midian, would you not rather have been one of that three hun-

dred than one of the cowardly twenty-two thousand or the careless ten thousand?

When Jesus sent the seventy out on their mission tour, and they returned so joyfully to tell Him of their success, with what passion of thankfulness He exclaimed, "I beheld Satan fallen as lightning from heaven!"; would you not rather have been one of those seventy than one of the "many disciples" who "went back, and walked no more with Him"?

Would you not rather have been one of the few who supported William Carey in his first daring venture, than one of the many whose venerable spokesman thundered, "Sit down, young man. . . . When God wants to save the heathen, He will do it without your assistance"?

If there are in the South a hundred thousand Baptists who, with great joy and many a secret sacrifice, will make their over-and-above gift of a dollar a month to save our mission work, would you not rather be one of them, than one of the many hundred thousand who say it can't be done? Don't you prefer to go on with God, whatever the majority of Southern Baptists do? God is going to find the people to do His work; He always has; wouldn't you rather be one of them?

"A noble army, men and boys, the matron and the maid,
Around the Saviour's throne rejoice, in robes of light arrayed.
They climbed the steep ascent of heaven through peril, toil
and pain;
O God, to us may grace be given to follow in their train."

Some day we may look into their faces; and not theirs only, but the faces of little children blessed; of women from whom the age-long burden of Christ-less womanhood has been lifted; of men awake to the beauty and meaning, the sacrifice and grandeur of life in Jesus—because *we* laid *our* gifts on the altar. Can there be any other luxury in life like that?

3. "He will not fail," said the Prophet of old—and this was

at a time when no people on earth knew Jehovah save only the little handful of captives to whom He spoke—"He will not fail nor be discouraged till He have set justice in the earth." He will not fail nor be discouraged now.

"In the beauty of the lilies, Christ was born across the sea,
With a glory in His bosom that transfigures you and me;
As He died to make men holy, let us"—*live*—"To make men
free: *Our God is marching on!*"

Shall we not catch step with Him? As the challenge of the centuries comes to us; as the lost world cries to us; as the unchanging purpose of our Saviour-God is revealed to us; shall we not lift up our hearts and answer,

"Lead on, O King Eternal; we follow, not with fears,
For gladness breaks like morning where'er thy face appears;
Thy cross is lifted o'er us; we journey in its light;
The crown awaits the conquest; lead on, O God of Might.
Amen."

Questions for Review and Discussion

1. Give briefly the story of how the Holy Spirit has worked for the salvation of the world from apostolic times until now.
2. Quote Isaiah 40:28, 29 and tell what relation it has to the discussion in this chapter.
3. Quote Isaiah 55:8-11 and discuss its bearing on the present mission situation.
4. Quote Mordecai's exhortation to Esther (Esther 4:14) and tell what is its message to you at the present time.
5. Give three verses in which Jesus gave expression to His purpose and work in the world. What do they mean to you in relation to your Christian stewardship?

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6. Give illustrations from the past showing what happens to a group of God's people who fail to let themselves be used of the Holy Spirit in His world-redemptive purpose.
 7. In this day of seeming danger to our mission enterprises, what three facts must a thoughtful Southern Baptist face?
 8. Name some servants of God who went up against seemingly impossible tasks, and tell what they accomplished.
 9. Give several marvelous achievements of the modern mission movement.
 10. Mention some rewards of following Christ in His world-redemptive program.

